

Tom Horne  
Superintendent

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## ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Contact: Doug Nick, Interim Press Secretary  
602-364-1945

### **HORNE SAYS IT'S TIME TO REFORM HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION**

*RETURNS FROM WASHINGTON, D.C. "BEST PRACTICES" CONFERENCE, SAYS ISSUE IS  
CRITICAL TO U.S. EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC VITALITY*

PHOENIX (October 9, 2003) – Arizona's Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Horne, returning from Washington, D.C. today from a conference on high school education reform, calls the issue one of the most important challenges facing educators in Arizona.

The conference, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, focused on academic accountability, setting higher expectations for graduation, improving skills in reading, math and science, ensuring success for disabled students, improving technical education, and smoothing the transition from high school to postsecondary education.

"Reforming the methods of teaching high school students is a critical task facing Arizona," Horne said. "International studies have shown that the public education system in the United States is above average with elementary school students and declines somewhat with the middle school system, and falls near the bottom at high school."

"That's a tremendous problem that needs to be corrected. Arizona's high school graduates need to excel academically not only for their personal benefit, but also because they need to be prepared for college and the workforce. The U.S. needs to become more competitive intellectually with the rest of the world or we risk losing much of our economic power."

"Scientifically-based research should be at the heart of every reform that will affect Arizona's public school system. There's no point in having reform for reform's sake. It must result in better academic performance."

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**NOTE: Supt. Horne will be available to speak with media on this matter at the Arizona Department of Education main office at 1535 W. Jefferson, 4<sup>th</sup> floor at 2:30 PM today, Thursday, October 9.**